



*More Than 40 Years of Caring*

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **ACADEMY AWARD WINNING ACTRESS PATTY DUKE WOWS AT SOLD OUT EAST HOUSE LUNCHEON**

**ROCHESTER, NY (September 29, 2011):** On Wednesday, September 28, Academy Award winning actress Anna 'Patty' Duke wowed 473 attendees at the sold out East House "Celebration of Hope and Recovery" luncheon. Ms. Duke who has worked as a successful actress, director and writer, also grapples with the effects of bi-polar disorder. "I am not the only one who was born with a chemical imbalance in my brain. The more we come out and share our stories with others, the healthier we will get," Ms. Duke explained. The actress spoke passionately and candidly about her diagnosis and its affect on her family and relationships.

East House's Celebration of Hope & Recovery luncheon is an initiative to underscore the efforts of those afflicted with mental illness and/or chemical dependency issues to live satisfying and productive lives. An East House client whom has dealt with mental illness for over twenty years said, "When I met Anna, she hugged me and called me her sister in arms." With tears in her eyes the client went on to explain, "You have no idea how invaluable it is to have a person who understands the struggles of mental illness come publically forward and show it is OK. I often struggle with the loneliness of this illness but Anna showed me that I am not alone. I am proud that she speaks for people like me that often struggle in silence."

Gregory Soehner, President and CEO of East House stated, "The goal of this luncheon is to help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and chemical dependencies. A person should not be defined by their diagnosis. By telling stories of recovery, like Anna's, the conversations about these illnesses shifts to one of the possibility of recovery. Ms. Duke is an inspiration to us all!"

Each year at the luncheon, East House presents Partners In Hope awards. These awards recognize individuals, corporations, community service providers or other organizations who provide consistently high levels of collaborative work with staff resulting in outstanding,

responsive and quality services. The 2011 East House Partners in Hope Award Winners were as follows:

Corporate Partner- Providence Housing & Development Corporation

Organizational Partner In Hope- Lowe's Heroes Volunteer Program

Individual Partner in Hope- Ms. Mary Ann Cocozzelli, Inpatient Social Worker at Strong Behavioral Health

Individual Partner in Hope- Ms. Rose Nicolosi-Sweeney, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Two other awards were also presented. The Beacon of Hope Award went to Mr. Jerry Barrick, an alumnus of East House who inspires clients. The Pinny Cooke Philanthropy Award went to Mr. William and Mrs. Cynthia Hosley.

The Luncheon Master of Ceremony was Beth Adams from WHAM 1180. "This year's Hope & Recovery Luncheon was an unforgettable afternoon with Ms. Duke, hearing about her story, seeing the compassion and faith she has for those with mental illness. Her positive energy and kindness will inspire me for years to come. I appreciate East House and all the work they do in educating us about these illnesses," stated Ms. Adams.

East House is a private, non-profit rehabilitation agency. Since it began in 1966, East House serves over 1,000 clients and families per year providing residential, support and rehabilitation services to individuals recovering from mental illness and chemical dependency. With programs like *Home to Stay*, which assists homeless persons suffering from mental illness with housing and support services to get them off the streets. Or *Child's Play* fund which provides children, who have a parent in recovery, the opportunity to go to camp or pursue other extracurricular activities. Or our Career Services programs that help over 200 people per year retrain and rejoin the Rochester workforce. East House is funded by New York State, Monroe County, United Way, client fees and donations. For more information, contact Sarah O'Brien at 256-3800, ext. 233.

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